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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone)

DATE DISTR. 29 November 1950

SUBJECT Soviet Rail Movements in the Soviet
Zone of Germany

NO. OF PAGES 2

PLACE
ACQUIREDDATE OF
INFO.

RETURN TO CIA

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT

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1. Empty trains have been dispatched from the Berlin to the Schwerin rail-
road district at an increased rate since 28 September 1950. The return
of trains carrying military units began on 30 September 1950, with 27
military troops trains, including empty trains, passing through the
Berlin railroad district on 30 September 1950. Six loaded troop trains,
including one from the Greifswald railroad district, were announced for
passage to the Berlin regional railroad headquarters prior to 1 p.m. on
1 October 1950.
2. All these train movements were subject to particularly close control by
the Soviet VOSO (Voyennye Soobshcheniya-rail transport control office) at
the Berlin regional railroad headquarters and were given priority over
routine traffic. Upon arrival in the Berlin railroad district, the trains,
some of which had been pulled by shunting engines, were given new loco-
motives. Many were loaded in Wittstock/Dosse, Quesnoy, Glogowen and Ludwigs-
lust. An unusually large number of trains went to the Magdeburg railroad
district, using the Neustadt/Dosse-Rathenow line. Late in afternoon of
30 September 1950 the Directorate-General gave orders to also use the
Wittenberge-Stendal-Magdeburg line in order to effect a smoother flow of
shipments. Military trains bound for the Brandenburg area used the Neu-
ruppin (Berlin district)-Nauen-Mustermark-Geddin-Belzig route and the
Neustadt/Dosse (Berlin district)-Nauen-Mustermark-Geddin-Belzig route.
Unloading stations in the Berlin railroad district included Belzig,
Rathenow and Juterbog.
3. All of these Soviet rail movements were effected without a schedule and
met with difficulties regarding locomotives and train crews. The entire
operation seemed to be improvised and was directed by the Soviets who did
not give any advance notice to the Berlin main train dispatch office. On
2 October 1950, when the number of loaded military trains passing through
the Berlin railroad district amounted to 20 and the Magdeburg-Stendal-
Wittenberge line had to be used for the empty troop trains, the head of
the operations department of the Berlin regional railroad headquarters was
summoned to Colonel Shesternin, (fnu), the newly appointed head of the
Soviet rail transport control office, who advised him to take all steps
appropriate to guarantee a smooth flow of Soviet transportation operations
during the following days. Colonel Shesternin also said that the trans-
portation operation would continue until 10 October 1950.

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Auth: MR 10-2
Date: 21 June 78

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4. The train dispatch office of the Schwerin regional railroad headquarters reported that in Mecklenburg the transportation operation ended on 4 October 1950. *
5. Beginning 4 October 1950 Soviet troop trains coming from the areas of Forst Zinna, Justerbog, Justerbog-Altes Lager and Rathenow, moved toward or entered the Halle railroad district. **

* [] Comment. The report presents a summarizing survey on rail movements of elements of the 18th Mecz Div and the 94th Gds Mtz Rifle Div from the Schwerin railroad district to the area south of the Rathenow-Mustermark line, which began on 28 September 1950. It supplements and confirms observations [] on loading operations and military rail movements in the same areas. [] Colonel Shesternin probably was Colonel Shodernin, who was previously identified at the Cottbus regional railroad headquarters.

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** [] Comment. The north-south road movements of small tank units, presumably elements of the 6th and 7th Gds Tank Divs, in the Wittenberg area about 26 and 27 September 1950 are believed to have been linked with the rail movements from the Justerbog area to the Halle railroad district, which began on 4 October 1950. [] It is still not clear whether these units were to participate in the maneuvers conducted by elements of the Third Shock Army in the area east and southeast of Magdeburg.

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